



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2026

8,209: Strategy for Sustainability (SIM)

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work group grade (40%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Oral examination and technical discussions, Analog, Group work individual grade (35%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Active participation, Analog, Individual work individual grade (25%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,209,1.00 Strategy for Sustainability \(SIM\)](#) -- English -- [Zobel Ann-Kristin](#)

Course information

Prerequisites

Basic knowledge of principles associated with strategic management and innovation management are recommended. The key prerequisites for participants are a high level of motivation and enthusiasm for sustainability issues and solution areas and interest to discuss how firms can strategically and innovatively explore these issues and solutions.

Learning objectives

1. Develop a nuanced understanding of sustainability challenges and identify how organizations' strategies and innovative efforts can address pressing global issues.
2. Explore the relevance and practical application of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to corporate strategies and innovation processes.
3. Gain deeper insights into climate change as the "red thread" of the SDGs and examine its interplay with business strategy, focusing on key solution areas: energy, mobility, industry, food systems, and carbon removal.
4. Critically assess and apply strategic management and innovation frameworks (e.g., open innovation, business model innovation) to sustainability challenges.
5. Enhance your analytical and strategic thinking skills through case-based learning and business challenges, developing actionable solutions to complex sustainability issues.
6. Work collaboratively in teams to deeply explore one sustainability focus area, develop innovative solutions, and present them to industry experts for feedback, bridging academic insights with practical application.
7. Synthesize academic insights and practical knowledge on sustainability challenges, SDGs, and innovation frameworks to develop a strategic mindset that drives impactful and sustainable business practices.

Content

Businesses today face unprecedented societal challenges, including climate change, resource depletion, and social inequality. The accelerating climate emergency makes sustainability a central issue for organizations, demanding new strategies and innovative solutions.

This course explores the intersection of strategy and sustainability, providing students with insights, tools, and frameworks to address these challenges and contribute to a more sustainable economy. Using the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a guiding framework, the course emphasizes their strategic relevance and potential for innovation. We focus particularly on SDGs tied to mitigating climate change, including problem-solution areas such as:



1. Energy
2. Mobility
3. Industry
4. Food Systems
5. Carbon Removal

The course bridges academic insights and practical applications by introducing students to strategic management and innovation frameworks (e.g., open innovation, business model innovation, innovation ecosystems) that enable firms to transform sustainability challenges into strategic opportunities.

Key themes include:

- Climate change as a strategic driver: Understanding how climate change affects business environments.
- Innovation for impact: Examining how firms can leverage innovation to create economic value while contributing to a more sustainable economy.
- Sustainability as strategy: Identifying how sustainability can drive competitive advantage.

Throughout the course, students will engage with **case studies**, **industry challenges**, and **guest lectures from sustainability leaders**. They will work collaboratively to develop innovative solutions to real-world sustainability problems, gaining firsthand insights into the complexity and opportunities of implementing strategies for sustainability.

Structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course is structured around two main formats to balance theoretical learning and practical application:

1. Interactive Lectures with Case Discussions

- These sessions introduce key SDG focus areas (energy, mobility, industry, food systems, and carbon removal) and explore strategic management and innovation frameworks.
- Case teaching will allow students to apply these frameworks to practical sustainability challenges, critically analyze complex issues, and engage in active, thoughtful discussions.
- Students are expected to come fully prepared, having completed assigned readings and case studies in advance.

2. Student Team Presentations and Industry Expert Sessions

- For these sessions, students collaborate in teams outside of class to address a sustainability/business challenge presented by an industry expert.
- Each team focuses deeply on one sustainability area, develops innovation solutions, and presents their findings in class.
- These sessions also feature guest lectures, where industry experts share their perspectives on the challenges and opportunities of implementing sustainable strategies.
- Teams will receive guidance and feedback from experts during coaching sessions and presentations, providing valuable real-world insights and professional development opportunities.
- Students will be in direct contact with practice partners, arrange and participate in coaching sessions, and are expected to share their results with the practice partners in final presentation sessions. A separate information sheet regarding the interaction with practice partners will be provided.

Literature

For each session, mandatory readings will be assigned on Studynet. These include the case reading as well as selected academic and more practitioner-oriented readings. A complementary reading list will be made available to the student teams to serve as a basis for their presentations.

Additional information

Please note that this course will not be open for bidding in the waiting list rounds. Students can bid for the course in the preliminary and main rounds of the bidding only.

Examination information



Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/3)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	40%
Duration	--

Languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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2. Examination sub part (2/3)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Oral examination and technical discussions
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work individual grade
Weighting	35%
Duration	--

Languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Closed Book



The use of aids is prohibited as a matter of principle, with the exception of pocket calculator models of the Texas Instruments TI-30 series and, in case of non-language exams, bilingual dictionaries without any handwritten notes. Any other aids that are admissible must be explicitly listed by faculty members in the paragraph entitled "Supplementary aids" of the course and examination fact sheet; this list is exhaustive.

Procuring any aids, as well as ensuring their working order, is the exclusive responsibility of students.

Supplementary aids

None

3. Examination sub part (3/3)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Active participation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Synchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	25%
Duration	--

Languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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Content

All course topics including the Sustainable Development Goals and focus areas (i.e. energy, mobility, industry, food, carbon removal), as well as the strategy and innovation frameworks (e.g. open innovation, business models) are relevant for the different examination formats. Students need to be able to describe, analyze, and reflect on concepts and frameworks from the lectures, cases, mandatory readings, and in-class discussions.

Literature

Both mandatory and optional readings will be made available on StudyNet before each session. All examination-relevant material (including readings and lecture slides) will be made available before the final session.



Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 23rd March 2026) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 22nd January 2026);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 16 March 2026);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 30 March 2026);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 06 April 2026).